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To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 12/21/01 5:00pm
Subject: AtATgram: One For The Record Books (12/20/01)

Brian <blburton@mac.com> is sending you a scene from _As_the_Apple_Turns!_

Scene 3467 follows:

One For The Record Books (12/20/01)

Hey, guess what? Something amazing happened today. Ready for this? They found a MICROSOFT SECURITY HOLE. Wait, don't leave! Yes, we know that Microsoft security flaws are about as rare as pennies with Lincoln's picture on them, but this one is different: it's bad. Really bad. So bad it makes most Microsoft security holes look like terrific new features they should be advertising in boldface caps on the box with lots of exclamation points. Yea verily, this is the great-granddaddy of all Windows vulnerabilities. (This is the part where you're supposed to gasp audibly and one or two of you actually faint for effect.)

Actually, technically the bug was discovered several weeks ago, but it was apparently kept pretty hush-hush until now. Faithful viewer DAVID MCCONNELL tipped us off to an Associated Press article which leads off with one of the greatest introductions we've ever seen: "Microsoft's newest version of Windows, billed as the most secure ever, contains several serious flaws that allow hackers to steal or destroy a victim's data files across the Internet or implant rogue computer software. _The company released a free fix Thursday._" Gosh, all they did is put the personal data of millions of customers at terrifying risk, and the fix is _free?_ The newfound benevolence of Redmond never ceases to amaze us. Clearly that whole Justice Department brouhaha did some good after all.

And the amazement just keeps on coming, because Microsoft actually seems to be admitting the gravity of the situation, calling it a "very serious vulnerability" and acknowledging that "the risk to consumers was unprecedented because the glitches allow hackers to seize control of all Windows XP operating system software without requiring a computer user to do anything except connect to the Internet." We are stunned-- _stunned_, we tell you-- that Microsoft hasn't therefore simply blamed the Internet for the problem. What's this world coming to?

By the way, no, there's no word on whether this was one of those

"trojans, trapdoors, and bugs" that a captured terrorist insists Al Qaeda managed to stick into Windows XP, but feel free to incorporate that possibility into your own twisted world view sans evidence if you like. Meanwhile, word has it that Microsoft has "forcefully urged" all users to install the patch right away, although we noticed a distinct lack of any mention of the problem whatsoever when we visited the company's home page. Maybe things haven't changed that much after all. Those of you running Windows XP should probably hunt down and install that patch ASAP; those of you who are just itching to exploit that vulnerability can rest easy in the knowledge that even if Microsoft calls every single registered user of XP, there's still going to be a fair percentage of people who won't bother to apply the patch. So take your time.

In closing, Microsoft is clearly the company with whom you want to trust your sensitive personal and financial information. Ooooooh yeah, .NET and Passport just sound better and better all the time...

To see this scene as it was meant to be seen, complete with links to articles and formatted as originally broadcast, visit:

<<http://www.appleturns.com/scene/?id=3467>>

To see the complete, unadulterated episode in which this scene was originally broadcast, visit:

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